



THE JUDICIAL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

AT THE SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES

Experience

The Judicial Internship Program at the Supreme Court of the United States offers advanced undergraduates and graduating seniors who have interests in law, management, and social sciences a unique opportunity to gain exposure to the field of judicial administration through work in the Office of the Administrative Assistant to the Chief Justice.

Established in 1972, the office aids the Chief Justice in fulfilling his nonjudicial responsibilities. The office staff includes a Supreme Court Fellow to whom the interns directly report.

This Program strives to offer its participants an experience which transcends that of other opportunities available to undergraduates. Judicial Interns benefit from opportunities at the Court which cannot be matched elsewhere. While in the majority of government offices an intern is only a face among countless other interns, this program enjoys the intimacy of having only two Judicial Interns. Such an atmosphere engenders a working environment of substantial responsibility, learning, and collegiality.

“An absolutely amazing experience.”

— DAVID M. LIEBERMAN, 2003

Duties

Interns work eight-hour days, five days a week. Thus, other employment is not feasible.

Judicial Interns perform some routine office tasks which include summarizing news articles and preparing memoranda and correspondence. The interns also conduct background research for speeches and review legislation on the federal judicial system.

Additionally, the Supreme Court Fellow and the Administrative Assistant to the Chief Justice determine research initiatives in which the interns will participate. These short- and long-term projects require interns to gather and assemble information. Such assignments demand experience with office and library resources, the ability to work under time constraints, strict attention to detail, creative thinking, and editorial skills.

Past assignments have included research on alternatives to litigation, problems of civil procedure, international law, and judicial relations. Office research is completely unrelated to the case work of the Supreme Court. Interns DO NOT work on cases pending before the Court.

Circumstances permitting, interns may also take advantage of the Court's extensive resources to work on their own academic or research projects.

Qualifications

The Program selects interns from a highly qualified applicant pool; they bring to the Program a wide range of backgrounds, talents, and qualifications.

More than 300 individuals from over 100 colleges across the nation have served as Judicial Interns. Competition is keen, and a certain amount of self-screening is advised. Advanced undergraduates and graduating seniors are encouraged to apply. In general, interns should possess the following qualities:

1. High intellectual development, including an ability to think clearly, speak articulately, and write cogently; substantial research experience; some course work on constitutional law or the Supreme Court; a demonstrated capacity to absorb extensive information and to analyze, summarize, and derive conclusions from it.
2. Ability and willingness to work closely with others in a complex and sensitive organization. Interns work closely with fellow interns, the Supreme Court Fellow, and other office staff.
3. Capacity to undertake a variety of tasks as assigned and a willingness to shoulder one's share of less glamorous tasks; an ability to function with a low profile in a hierarchical institution in which interns are only temporary.
4. Unusual trustworthiness and discretion, maturity, and a nondoctrinaire approach to projects and issues. Good judgment is critical.
5. Self-sustaining motivation and initiative. The office is busy, and supervisory time is limited. Consultation with staff on specific questions and ideas is expected, but interns should carry research as far as possible and present their findings in succinctly written memoranda.

"I never lost my sense of awe at just being here. And what I've learned — not just about the Court, but about myself and working with others — will benefit me the rest of my life."

— AE JEAN CHA, 2000

Application

Students wishing to apply to the Judicial Internship Program must submit the following application materials:

1. A resume;
2. An official transcript, sealed and sent directly;
3. Three letters of recommendation, from a variety of references, to be sent directly to the Office of the Administrative Assistant;
4. A written statement presenting the candidate's reasons for seeking this internship and demonstrating that the candidate's experiences (scholastic and non-scholastic), skills, and personality meet the Program's criteria (*Please label this "candidate statement"*);
5. A writing sample, such as a short term paper, no longer than 10 pages (*Please label this "writing sample"*);
6. An essay of not less than two pages giving the candidate's view of the importance of the American constitutional system (*Please label this "constitutional essay"*).

Please double-space the candidate statement, writing sample, and essay.

To help schedule internships, the candidate should list preferred alternative times when he or she will be available to participate in the program. Telephone Interviews may be conducted after receipt of a complete application.

Since interns often have access to sensitive information, anything they write about their experience must be reviewed by the Court's Public Information Officer; no papers or copies may be taken from the office except by express written permission.

Opportunities

Participants usually find the internship both interesting and educational. Since the judicial branch operates on a fraction of the scale of the executive and legislative branches, interns can readily gain familiarity with the way the Court functions.

The Program also enables its participants to become familiar with the various internal offices that assist the Court in its duties. Recent interns have received tours of the Marshal's Office, the Clerk's Office, Data Systems, and the Library.

When time permits, interns may observe Court sessions and take advantage of outside lectures and conferences. The office occasionally holds educational luncheon meetings with individuals from government, academia, and private institutions. In recent years interns have attended Program-sponsored luncheons with Associate Justices, Counsel to the President, and the Solicitor General.

The internship is unpaid. Depending on funding, a \$1000 scholarship may be available based on the following criteria:

1. Interns must **successfully complete** the internship.
2. Within one year of completing the internship, students must return to an undergraduate program or enroll in a graduate or professional degree program.

Interns sometimes receive academic credit through special arrangement with their college or university.

"The internship is one of constant learning. The opportunity for expanding one's understanding of the Court is limitless."

— MARCIE COHEN and HEATHER DIETRICK, 2002

Deadlines

A candidate should apply well in advance of the prospective internship. Because candidates are not notified automatically concerning the completeness of their applications, the candidate is responsible for ascertaining that all portions of the application have been received. Final deadlines for **postmark** of complete internship applications are as follows:

FALL (September-December) JUNE 10
SPRING (January-May) OCTOBER 20
SUMMER (June-August) MARCH 10

Interns selected for Fall and Spring should plan to work for 16 weeks. Summer Interns are expected for 12 weeks. The dates of an internship can be reasonably accommodated to an intern's schedule provided the Intern Office is staffed sufficiently to meet its responsibilities.

"The Judicial Internship Program offers undergraduates a living exercise in Constitutional law that no classroom could rival."

— ROB JACKSON and YURIJ PAWLUK, 2000

Please address all application materials and further inquiries to:
Supreme Court Fellow, Office of the Administrative Assistant to the Chief Justice
Supreme Court of the United States, Room 5
Washington, D.C. 20543
(202) 479-3415
Website: www.supremecourtus.gov